

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY VIENNA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8521

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: AGAO, ETRD, OPEC

SUBJECT: GAO SURVEY: "INTERNATIONAL OIL MARKET SYSTEM"

REF: (A) STATE 96481; (B) FRANKFURT 3042; (C) VIENNA 3413

1. SUMMARY: GAO TEAM MEMBERS STEPHEN W. HACHTEN AND CHARLES W. MATTOX SPENT APRIL 26-28 IN VIENNA ON SUBJECT SURVEY, MEETING WITH EMBOFFS, OPEC AND OIL COMPANY OFFICIALS. THEY EXPRESSED SATISFACTION WITH APPOINTMENTS ARRANGED FOR THEM ON SHORT NOTICE AND WITH EXTENT OF INFORMATION RECEIVED. END SUMMARY.

2. AS REPORTED REF. C., VISITORS HAD DISCUSSIONS WITH EMBOFFS REGARDING ENERGY REPORTING AND WERE BRIEFED ON OPEC SECRETARIAT AND AUSTRIAN ENERGY PICTURE. THEY INQUIRED HOW MUCH TIME EMBASSY DEVOTED TO ENERGY MATTERS (ANSWER: 1 1/4 TO 1 1/2 MAN YEARS) AND WHETHER DEPARTMENTAL GUIDANCE ON THIS SUBJECT WAS CONSIDERED ADEQUATE (ANSWER: POLICY GUIDANCE ADEQUATE; OCCASIONAL SEMINARS, CONFERENCES, SHORT COURSES ON ENERGY DEVELOPMENTS WOULD BE MOST USEFUL TO REPORTING OFFICERS). VISITORS ASKED TO SEE OPEC FILES FOR 1975 AND 1976; ON BASIS OF BARDACH/DANIEL GUAID A/BF/OAG TELECONS AND IN ABSENCE OF REPLY TO EMBTEL 3413, REQUESTED FILES WERE SHOWN TO THEM AFTER SCREENING AND REMOVAL OF ALL POLICY-RELATED MATERIAL. AS IT TURNED OUT, VISITORS DID NOT LOOK AT EMBASSY'S OTHER ENERGY FILES

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(CIEC, IEA, ETC).

3. OPEC: VISITORS WERE UNABLE TO SEE SECRETARY GENERAL FEYIDE WHO CHAIRED ECONOMIC COMMISSION BOARD MEETINGS WEEK THEIR VISIT. HOWEVER, DESPITE FACT THAT SECTION HEADS WERE ALSO PARTICULARLY OCCUPIED IN ASSISTING ECB, VISITORS WERE GIVEN APPOINTMENT ON APRIL 27 AT OPEC AND HAD ONE-HOUR MEETING A(ALSO ATTENDED BY EMBOFF) WITH HAMID ZAHERI, ACTING HEAD OF INFORMATION DEPT., DR. MAHJCOB HASSANAIN, HEAD OF ECONOMICS DEPT., AND S.A.R. AL-KADHIM, HEAD OF TECHNICAL DEPT. OPEC OFFICIALS DESCRIBED THEIR ROLE AS TECHNICIANS AND STRESSED THEIR LACK OF DECISION-MAKING AUTHORITY. THERE WAS SOME DISCUSSION OF OPEC STUDIES CURRENTLY UNDERWAY, PARTICULARLY THE WORLD ENERGY MODEL, BUT NEWSWORTHY INFORMATION WAS NOT DISCLOSED. WE BELIEVE VISIT DID, HOWEVER, GIVE VISITORS BETTER IMPRESSION OF SECRETARIAT ROLE AND CAPABILITIES AND PROVIDED AN IMPORTANT DIMENSION TO THEIR SURVEY. VISITORS WERE TOLD THAT SECRETARIAT EMPLOYS 70 PEOPLE INCLUDING 30 OFFICERS. VISITORS THEMSELVES SEEMED EXTREMELY PLEASED WITH THE OPEC APPOINTMENT.

4. GOA VISITORS ROUNDED OUT VIENNA STOP IN DISCUSSIONS HELD SEPARATELY WITH DR. HANS G. KRISCHAI, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF ESSO AUSTRIA AND DIPL. ING. GEORGE P. RUSSEBACH, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF MOBIL OIL AUSTRIA (BOTH DISCUSSIONS ATTENDED BY EMBOFFS). THE OIL MEN DESCRIBED ENERGY SITUATION IN AUSTRIA, GOA PLANS FOR RESERVE OIL STOCKS, AND THEIR COMPANIES' ROLES AS SUPPLIERS AND DISTRIBUTORS. THEY INFORMED VISITORS THEY HAVE NO OFFICIAL CONTACT WITH OPEC AND DISCLAIMED ANY INSIDE KNOWLEDGE OF OPEC AFFAIRS.BUCHANAN

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